MAY 1958

THIRTY FIVE CENTS

# MONTHLY REVIEW

AN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST MAGAZINE

VOL. 10

1

## WHAT EVERY AMERICAN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT NORTH AFRICA

THE EDITORS

*An Essay Contest*

EDITORS . . . LEO HUBERMAN . . . PAUL M. SWEEZY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONTENTS | VOLUME TEN | NUMBER ONE | MAY 1958

REVIEW OF THE MONTH: What Every American Should Know About North Africa ..... 1
AN ESSAY CONTEST ..... 18
THE MEN OF MATRIARCHAL AMERICA from Eve Merriam ..... 20
WORLD EVENTS by Scott Nearing ..... 23
WHERE WE STAND by The Editors ..... 30

MONTHLY REVIEW: Published monthly and copyright, 1958, by Monthly Review, Inc.
EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS: 218 West 10th Street, New York 14, New York.
*Telephone: ORegon 5-6939.*
MAILING ADDRESS: 66 Barrow Street, New York 14, New York.
Address ALL communications to 66 Barrow Street.
SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: One year—$4; two years—$7.
By 1st class mail—United States $6; everywhere else $7.
By air mail—No. America $8; So. America $13; Europe $17; Asia $24.
EDITORS: Leo Huberman and Paul M. Sweezy.

## NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

With this issue we begin our tenth year of publication. They have been interesting, and difficult years—especially for radical journals. We salute those of our 400-odd charter subscribers who are still with us; our heartfelt thanks to the thousands of others who have joined since May 1949 and have helped us stay alive. We shall do our utmost to merit your continued support.

The other day, to our amazement, we ran across a student of world affairs who had never heard of G. D. H. Cole. What a strange new world we live in! Old-timers will know that he is the author of more books and pamphlets in the fields of politics, economics, and history than perhaps any other writer alive—plus an additional 30 or more mystery stories written jointly with his noted wife, Margaret Cole. When he reached retiring age at Oxford nine months ago his colleague, the distinguished historian A. J. P. Taylor, wrote a tribute to him which appeared in *The New Statesman* on

(*continued on inside back cover*)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# WHAT EVERY AMERICAN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT NORTH AFRICA

The current crisis in North Africa is only the most recent in a long series. Indeed, ever since 1945, North Africa has been in a state of chronic crisis—a crisis which, though varying in degree of acuteness as Algeria, Tunis, and Morocco have alternated in occupying the center of the stage, has throughout had an unmistakable underlying unity. Not only are the three countries of the Maghreb (Arabic for West) intimately bound together by the ties of culture, race, religion, language, and geographical proximity, they have also been engaged in the same struggle for national liberation from their common oppressor, French imperialism. It is therefore impossible to consider the current Algerian situation in isolation from previous developments in the area as a whole.

At first sight, the crisis in these three countries is bewilderingly complex. The structure of their economies and polities is most variegated—tribalism is still extant in parts of Morocco—and religion is everywhere a significant if not dominant political factor. The very names of the parties, persons, and places are strange. Add to it all the labyrinthine crisscross of internal French politics and the whole subject seems an esoteric mystery.

## Three Clues

There are three indispensable clues to this mystery. The first, a point to which we have recurred time and again in discussing international affairs, is that imperialism is a dying system. Like Charles II, it may be taking an unconscionable time a-dying—even if, unlike Charles II, it is not apologetic about its death throes—but dying it is. What Lenin called the moribund stage of capitalism is itself moribund. Many of the colonial and semi-colonial countries of Asia have gained their national independence since 1945, and the colonial liberation movement has been gathering impetus throughout Africa. The Maghreb has not been immune from this process.

The second clue is that French imperialism in North Africa is an imperialism of settlement as well as of conquest; there are sizeable French populations in all three countries, especially in Algeria where there are over a million Europeans.

The third clue is that France is the weakest link in the chain



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the great imperialist powers. Great Britain and France are the two classical countries of imperialism, but while both are obviously in decline, France is far the weaker in economic resources and much the more deficient in political know-how. Its decline has therefore been the more precipitous and through its ferocity, greed, and stupidity the French ruling class is proving itself its own most effective gravedigger.

France is the David of the imperialist powers; "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands." The peculiar bloodthirstiness of French imperialism, which is due both to the nature of imperialism as such and also to the fact that France is the weakest link in the imperialist chain, is often forgotten. Let us therefore list a few of its worst massacres since 1945, using as a criterion episodes involving the deaths of at least 5,000 people, and excluding *ratissages* (literally: scraping, raking up the soil) such as that in Cape Bon, Tunis, in January 1952, the continuous *ratissages* in Algeria since the FLN (*Front de Libération Nationale*) uprising at the end of October 1954, and lynching riots by the *colons* (colonizers or settlers) such as those in Casablanca in December 1952 and August 1955, in each of which hundreds of Moroccans were killed.

May 1945: Constantine, Algeria, precise number of deaths unknown, but not less than 10,000; some American correspondents reported 30-40,000 deaths.

June 1945: bombing of Damascus, Syria.

November 1946: Haiphong, Indochina, shelling of civilians, 6,000 deaths admitted by the French; Vietnamese claim 20,000.

1947: Madagascar, at least 80,000 deaths in suppression of uprising.

August 1955: Algeria, 5,000 Moslems killed in 48 hours with villages bombed and burned in reprisals for rebel attacks. Georges Penchenier of *Le Monde* visited a village near Philippeville where 50 old men, women, and children had been killed in a punitive raid.

After this catalogue, the indiscriminate bombing of Sakiet on February 8, the immediate cause or rather occasion of the present accentuated crisis, should come as no surprise.

## Historical Background

France first invaded Algeria in 1830. Imperialist powers have frequently used the excuse of defaults on debts for justifying invasion and conquest, but in this case it was France which had not paid for Algerian wheat bought during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars—and the Dey of Algiers, whose patience was overtaxed, had



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dared to slap the French Consul with a flywhisk. Conquest was completed in the 1840s and 1850s with a force of 90-100,000 men, but there was a big tribal revolt in 1871 and a smaller one in 1881. French policy was designed to smash the tribes and Algerian political institutions, and to pulverize the traditional fabric of society. There was no nonsense about Algeria's being a protectorate, it was a colony from the beginning. The French *colons* were given internal autonomy in 1900, which greatly enhanced their already considerable powers.

With the carving up of Africa, France extended its sway over the Maghreb, establishing protectorates in Tunis in 1881 and in French Morocco in 1912. Nominally, France became the protecting power by voluntary treaty, but actually both the Treaty of Bardo in 1881 and the Treaty of Algeciras in 1912 were imposed and signed under duress. Abdel Krim led a large-scale revolt in French and Spanish Morocco in 1925 which it took many years to suppress, and the conquest of French Morocco was not completed until 1934.

While the legal status of Morocco and Tunis was difficult to define precisely, they were in fact French colonies.

Economically, Tunis was *and is* part of the French Customs Union and the Franc Area, while Morocco was *and is* in the Franc Area and was *and is* limited to maximum import duties of 12½ percent on French goods.

Politically, while the status of Protectorate was maintained, Lyautey's strategy of control rather than direct administration soon ceased to be practicable, and the Sultan of Morocco and the Bey of Tunis were deposable at French will; at the same time, the fact that nationalist movements developed earlier and became stronger in Morocco and Tunis than in Algiers is easy to understand in terms of their later conquest and of the retention of at least some elements of their traditional political structure.

Militarily, the standard size of the French Army in North Africa was 100,000 men up to 1939. Although Morocco became independent in 1955 and Tunis in 1956, France *still has* 35,000 troops in the former and about 20,000 in the latter.

The story of the emergence and growth of the nationalist movement in the inter-war years reveals characteristics common to all three countries. In each, the infant nationalist movement had a definite religious tinge, was at first lukewarmly supported by some Moslem notables, and grew stronger with increasing support from the nascent working class and national bourgeoisie. Paris-returned students and demobilized soldiers tended to displace more purely religious figures in the leadership and Communists, first French from



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the metropolis and then Arabs from the Maghreb itself, generally supported the broader national movements. In each case the French answer to nationalist demands, usually limited and rarely going beyond the demand for regional autonomy within the French Union (except in Morocco), was severe repression, the relaxations introduced by the Popular Front Government in 1936 proving very short-lived. It is important to emphasize that throughout this period the nationalist parties of North Africa had close interconnections both through the Pan-Arab movement *and through direct contacts with each other.*

Volumes have been written about the impact of World War II on the Maghreb, but unfortunately they are almost exclusively confined to military operations and the international diplomatic complications attendant upon the presence of large foreign armies, and on the division of France between Vichy and the Resistance.

The decisive event of the War for the peoples of North Africa themselves was the defeat of France in 1940 which gave the nationalist movements a tremendous fillip and which, in the last analysis, presaged the loss of North Africa by French imperialism. The French in North Africa, the regional administration, the armed forces, and the *gros colons,* were thoroughly riddled with Vichyism, which of itself should have served to discredit them and to facilitate a working compromise with the Algerian and Tunisian demands for autonomy and the Moroccan demand for formal independence. But the Vichyites quickly managed to stage a comeback, and de Gaulle showed himself an unimaginative imperialist of the old school. He simply would not take into account the fact that France's weakness and the Maghreb's newly acquired ability to exploit some of the imperialist contradictions immediately arising from the presence of Allied armies gave the nationalists a bargaining power which France could ill afford to ignore.

Morocco was particularly well situated to turn France's defeat to its advantage. Roosevelt, during his visit in June 1943, went out of his way to show friendship for the young Sultan and displeasure with the old-school colonialist Resident Puaux. The French unwillingness to budge resulted in the fusion of the chief nationalist groups into the Istiqlal (Independence) Party in December 1943, and most of its leaders were arrested or exiled soon after.

The situation in Tunis was botched, partly but by no means entirely through British ineptitude, when the Bey of Tunis was deposed in 1943, and it was a simple matter for the Néo-Destour (New Constitution) Party to win overwhelming mass support for its demand for national autonomy.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In Algeria, De Gaulle backtracked to a repetition of the Blum-Violette proposal of 1936, namely the offer of French citizenship to a limited number of Algerians, which in 1943 was adding insult to injury. By the spring of 1945 there were numerous signs of unrest in the countryside which alarmed the *gros colons*. It was stated in the Consultative Assembly in Paris on July 11-12, 1945, that at least one *gros colon* had foreknowledge of the riot in Sétif during the celebration of VE-Day on May 8 which was the immediate occasion for the terrible massacre ensuing in the Constantine. This massacre has been described by a Frenchman as "ferocious, pitiless and truly inhuman in its lack of discernment." (H. Bénazet, *L'Afrique Française en Danger*, p. 52.)

With the defeat of the Axis in Europe all the Maghreb was in ferment, and only the blind could not see that the old French order was on its way out. The blind comprised the whole of the French Right, a large block of the Center parties, and the leadership of the Socialist party.

## Economic Background

> There are in effect two economies in Algeria. The first is composed of immigrants from France (and elsewhere in southern Europe), and a relatively small number of Moslems. The early immigrants settled on the land and produced cereals and wine for French markets with what were relatively modern techniques. They also developed the iron and phosphate mines. . . . Ports, railways, roads, and schools in Algeria were financed, directly or indirectly, by the French Government. In addition, current expenditures of the French Government, including subsidies for Algeria's staple exports of wine and cereals, have provided an appreciable source of income.
>
> The new farms, mines, railways, and government offices offered little opportunity for Moslems except as unskilled labor. They were organized *by and for* the immigrant population. The Moslems, on the whole, continued to live in their traditional way. They had neither the capital or skill to compete with the immigrants in the modern economy. The traditional economy exported a little food and some raw materials and a great deal of labor to the modern economy and to France. It imported modest amounts of consumer goods. (J. W. Saxe, "The Economics of Algeria, II," *The Banker,* London, November, 1957, p. 731; emphasis added.)

This excellent albeit unconscious summary of the economics of imperialism in Algeria applies also to Morocco and Tunis, with certain qualifications arising from the relatively smaller number of



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Frenchmen and the greater development of a national bourgeoisie and working class in those countries. France has tied North Africa to the French national market and obstructed the emergence, especially in Algeria, of a real national market. The Frenchmen in the Maghreb are, except for their immediate access to cheap Moslem labor, for all practical purposes part and parcel of the French national economy. At the same time, the preponderant part of North African trade is with France and, in addition, Frenchmen handle most of the remainder. France accounts for two-thirds of the Maghreb's imports and takes three-fifths of its exports. It may be added that as an imperialism of settlement the French ruling class exploits not only the North African peoples but also the French people who have to pay, in the form both of taxes and a higher cost of living, for all the subsidies in addition to the heavy military burden of the maintenance of the *présence française*.

The division of Algeria into two economies is the country's fundamental economic characteristic. It is on this division that all the French ruling class's proposed solutions of the Algerian problem—federation, integration, assimilation, or Mollet's recognition of the Algerian "personality"— necessarily founder, since they all presuppose the maintenance and not the obliteration of this division.

### French Domination on the Land . . .

The rest is painfully straightforward. Europeans form about an eighth of Algeria's population of nearly 10 million. Prior to the partial exodus of Frenchmen from Tunis and Morocco since 1955, they formed some 7 percent of Tunis' population of 3.5 million, and some 4 percent of Morocco's population of roughly 9.5 million. In Algeria, 22,000 European farms cover a quarter of the 25 million acres under cultivation; in Tunis 6,100 European farms cover a fifth of the cultivated land; and in Morocco Europeans own about an eighth of the farm area. But this is only part of the story. To cite the UN *Economic Developments in Africa 1955-1956,* the European land in all three countries is concentrated in the relatively better watered and more irrigated coastal areas so that Europeans own the most fertile and best situated farms. They have the capital resources to combine mechanization with the exploitation of cheap Maghrebi labor which receives a wage of about 85 cents a day (in some cases less) for a 12-hour day (in some cases 14).

Since about 60 percent of the European land under cultivation in Algeria is productive as against under 36 percent of the native-owned land, the average European farm has about *eighteen* times as much productive land as the average Algerian farm. However,



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

averages are particularly misleading in a bifurcated economy. In both the European and Algerian sectors one-quarter of the farmers own three-quarters of the total, so that the land held by 5,500 Europeans equals in area that held by 480,000 or so Algerian farmers and of course far exceeds the latter in productivity and output. The average size of the majority of Algerian farms is less than 10 acres and they are for the most part located on low-yielding soil. Needless to say, there is no French equivalent of the vast and growing Moslem landless rural proletariat. The feudal Moslem landowning class has been a major source of the *beni oui oui* (yesmen) recruited by the Frenchmen for various political purposes.

It should be unnecessary to repeat that what is true of Algeria is true, with appropriate adjustments, for Morocco and Tunis too.

Algeria and Tunis import about half their wheat. While Algerian wheat production has not risen since 1911, vineyards now occupy 1 million acres of land. The logic of Algeria's producing wine for export to France and importing French sugar, the most expensive in the world, when the Algerian vineyards could more than meet domestic sugar requirements if turned to beet, becomes apparent only when it is realized that the vineyards are owned by Frenchmen who receive substantial export subsidies, and that domestic French production and export of sugar are also heavily subsidized. No wonder the North African and sugar-beet lobbies work closely together in Paris.

According to the UN report on North Africa already cited, non-European agriculture in the Maghreb consists largely of farming for subsistence. And it is subsistence at a very low level indeed. A French inquiry in 1948 revealed that 60 percent of Algerian rural families are "totally indigent," and the Administration considers *all* agricultural laborers "socially indigent." The Algerian average rural per capita income is about $55—and this in a country with a high internal price level. Nothing brings out the division between the two economies more tragicomically than the fact that the per capita meat consumption has risen since 1954 because of the influx of French soldiers. (UN, *op.cit.*, p. 3)

There is enormous chronic unemployment and underemployment, both rural and urban, throughout the Maghreb. Nearly a million people are either totally unemployed or only intermittently employed in Algeria; of this number 800,000, or a quarter of the active agricultural population, are villagers and over 150,000, or a third of the Algerian industrial labor force, are townsmen. In Tunis there are nearly 400,000 unemployed and in Morocco there are 350,000.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Much has been made of the acute demographic problems of Algeria and Tunis with respective annual increases in their populations of 250,000 and 70,000, and with consequent mounting pressure on their means of employment. Suffice it to say here that these problems are utterly intractable under a system postulated on the coexistence of the two economies and on the exploitation of the indigenous by the European economy.*

### And in Industry

Modern industry and mining in North Africa are essentially a French monopoly with a naturally larger concentration of ownership than in agriculture. A few concerns, such as the *Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas* and the Protestant Mirabeau-Hottinger combination and their holding companies, together with the tycoon *gros colons* such as Senator Borgeaud and Deputy Blanchette in Algeria, occupy the commanding positions in finance, industry, and commerce. Thus, in Tunis, 4 companies own 23 percent of all French property.

The Maghrebi national bourgeoisie is by and large confined to commerce and the professions. It is still small and weak, particularly in Algeria, although it is experiencing a fairly rapid development in Morocco. The extent of professional employment opportunities for Maghrebis may be gauged from the fact that nine-tenths of the students at the University of Algiers are Europeans. But then about 80 percent of the Moslem population of North Africa are illiterate, which is presumably one of the things the authors of the French Parliamentary Commission Report on Algeria (July 1, 1955) had in mind when they stated: "We do not wish to underestimate the great accomplishments of France in Algeria. But we must confess that the Europeans have benefited far more from these improvements than have the natives."

Moslem workers in modern industry are mainly semi-skilled and unskilled, and in Algeria, European skilled workers outnumber Moslem. Paradoxically, there are more Algerian workers employed in French industry in France than in French industry in Algeria. In 1954 they remitted to their families the sum of 34 billion francs, or over a quarter of *all* the wages derived from industry and commerce in Algeria. (UN, *op.cit.*, p. 13.) The presence of underpaid and underprivileged Algerian workers has had significant political repercussions in France, and it would appear that French imperialism

---

* For an admirable discussion of the population problem in underdeveloped countries see Paul A. Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth*, pp. 237-248.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

has succeeded in imprinting its stigma on sections of the French working class.*

### Much Too Little Much Too Late

With the conclusion of World War II, the nationalists of Algeria as well as Tunis were willing to negotiate a settlement involving national autonomy within the French Union. Agreement on a basis similar to that of the Indian-British arrangements of 1947 would undoubtedly have been acceptable to their most influential leaders, even though there were already some who were asking for complete independence and adherence to the Arab League.

It must be stressed that the nationalist parties of all three countries, which had organized the Arab Bureau of the Maghreb in March 1947 to coordinate their propaganda, tried the path of peaceful negotiation many times but that the French ignored or intimidated them whenever possible. When, under the mounting pressure of colonial discontent the French did negotiate, it was always much too little much too late. To make matters worse, the French frequently modified or withdrew concessions they had made in "positions of weakness" and resorted to naked military force when they felt they were in "positions of strength."

### In Tunis . . .

With the solitary exception of Mendès-France's famous intervention in Tunis in August 1954, the French record is uniformly consistent. In Tunis the Néo-Destour, many of whose leaders were still in jail or exile, appealed in vain to the United Nations as early as 1947. Trade union activity, combined with the return of Bourguiba in September 1949, brought nationalist agitation to a head. Even in 1950 Néo-Destour was only aiming at an arrangement "leading Tunis by rapid stages to independence within the ensemble constituted around France." The French kept on rejecting Tunisian demands, however watered down, and reacted violently to a Tunisian appeal to the United Nations in December 1951. In January 1952 rioting broke out which was ruthlessly dealt with by the new Resident Hauteclocque and by General Garbay, the butcher of Madagascar. There followed the *ratissage* of Cape Bon, and all the Néo-Destour leaders the authorities could lay their hands on were arrested. It was the egregious Hauteclocque who declared in 1952: "Bourguiba is just a myth, a legend. The Tunisians have already forgotten him".

---

* See Paul Sweezy, "Socialism in Europe, East and West," *MR*, February, 1958, p. 337.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This by-product of what Sartre calls the mythological interpretation of reality was to recur again and again in French evaluations of the strength of the nationalist movements, the best-known recent instance being Minister for Algeria Lacoste's perpetual "last quarter of an hour."

Despite the unrest the French would not abandon "co-sovereignty," a category which according to the highest legal authorities is juridically undefinable but which defines itself all too easily in matters of actual political, economic, and military control. The trade unions, now under reformist leadership and receiving direct financial assistance from the AFL-CIO, played a prominent part in the nationalist agitation. The French bided their time until the election of Eisenhower in 1952. In December, they struck both in Tunis and Morocco. Ferhat Hashed, the trade union leader whom the *colons* of Tunis regarded as an American agent, was assassinated. The trade union movement in Casablanca declared a protest strike and the local *colons* retaliated with a big lynching riot (it should be apparent that the trade unions, and nationalist parties of the three countries were approaching a greater and greater degree of informal unity of action, a unity of action imposed on them by their common enemy as well as by social, political, and religious ties). In 1953 the Tunisian *fellah* (peasants) started guerrilla activities, and by the summer of 1954 the whole situation was out of control.

At this stage Mendès-France was strong enough in France to make the minimum concessions which Néo-Destour would have readily accepted in 1945 but which by now were only a temporary resting place.* The French rearguard action was in vain. Partly as a result of the Moroccan fiasco Tunis achieved formal independence in March 1956. Relations with France were strained by the latter's unwillingness to evacuate her troops, by her insistence on Tunisian concessions in return for financial aid and, not least, by French brutality in Algeria. In fact, France cut off financial aid last year, and these issues were still pending at the time of the Sakiet incident.

### Morocco . . .

In Morocco again the French ignored or persecuted Istiqlal and played ball with Quislings such as El Glaoui, the Berber Pasha of Marrakesh, and the phony Democratic Party of Independence.

---

* Mendès-France's success in Tunis may also have been due to the fact that Tunis was a smaller colony than Algeria or Morocco, neither of whose problems did he dare to tackle while he was in power. Indeed the FLN uprising started in October 1954 while he was still Premier.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

General Juin, a colonialist of the old school who was Resident from 1947 to 1951, would not budge from a position of "co-sovereignty" and insisted on the retention of French treaty privileges. Disturbances and lynchings, usually following incidents provoked by the *colons* and police, were common occurrences. Lunacy reached its peak in the deposition of Sultan Mohamed V in 1953 and in the French riots against the newly appointed Mendèsiste Resident Grandval in August 1955. But in this case retribution came fast. The popular reaction to the riots was immediate and the French were abandoned by their oldest allies, including El Glaoui, in whose *volte-face* American influence apparently played some part (America's air bases in Morocco gave her a material interest in the maintenance of a modicum of internal stability). The puppet Sultan Arafa had to leave the country and Mohamed V returned in November. Morocco now attained formal independence. A few months earlier, the Sultan had been willing to settle for independence reached in stages extending over a period of 25 years!

## Algeria

Bad as is the French record in Tunis and Morocco, it is far worse in the colony of Algeria. The *colons* more overtly and unrestrainedly dominated the regional and local governments—French imperialism has been less adept than the British in developing colonial administrators to act as a check on white settlers in the latter's own interests—and were so powerfully represented in Paris as to be able to block or nullify meaningful reforms. Thus the only parts of the organic law of 1947 on the status of Algeria which were applied were those favoring the *colons;* the Socialists and Mendès-France often argue that this law was potentially a great advance, but in fact it was flatly rejected by *all* Algerian nationalists. A more recent and more dramatic demonstration of *colon* power was furnished on February 6, 1956, when Premier Mollet and General Catroux, his newly appointed Resident-Minister for Algeria, visited Algiers. The *colons* were violently opposed to Catroux whom they regarded as a Mendèsiste although he was actually no more than an enlightened disciple of Lyautey's. The French community greeted Mollet and Catroux with a well-organized riot. Mollet came, saw, and was conquered; Catroux resigned and the Socialist Lacoste, worthy successor to the earlier Socialist Governor-General Naegelen whose cooking of Algerian elections had become a byword, was appointed in his stead.

The politics and ideology of the Algerian *colons* are classically clear products of their economic interests. There is nothing to add



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to two observations, one by the empire-builder Jules Ferry 65 years ago, and the other by Sartre in his suppressed pamphlet *La Victoire* only yesterday.

> It is difficult to make the European colonist understand that other rights than his exist in an Arab country and that the indigenous people are not a race subject to levy and corvée at mercy. . . . They scarcely understand any other policy vis-a-vis three million people than repression. (Jules Ferry, *Le Gouvernement de l'Algérie,* 1892, pp. 80-81.)

> For most Europeans in Algeria there are two complementary and inseparable truths: that they have a divine right and that the natives are sub-human. This is a mythological interpretation of reality, since the riches of the one are built on the poverty of the other. (Jean-Paul Sartre, *La Victoire,* as translated by the *Observer,* London, March 9, 1958.)

The result of the French settlement's Bourbonism was the solidification of the nationalist movement. At one time, the religious elements had found it hard to cooperate with the more secularized political groups. As for the more moderate elements, who had relied on constitutional means and who in 1946 had aspired to "a new Algeria freely federated to a new France . . . thanks to the joint action of Moslem and French democrats," their dilemma was neatly summed up by their leader, Ferhat Abbas: "When we ask for equality we are told we are Moslems and Algerians, when we ask for independence we are told we are Frenchmen." As it became clear that the French would not part with an ounce of their power and privileges, all political groupings, including the religious and moderate forces, were pushed in the direction of an armed uprising with the objective of complete independence. The influence of the maverick Messali Hadj, who in the thirties had flirted first with the French Communists and then with the French Fascists, became smaller and smaller, his major following being confined to some sectors of the Algerian workers in France.

There is no need here to review nationalist political developments in the last decade in detail. The unity of the Algerian nationalist movement in political action was imposed on its various constituents by France itself and culminated in the FLN uprising in the Aurès mountains at the end of October 1954. While the uprising was begun by a few hundred ill-armed men, it gained the support of the broadest sections of the Algerian people and gathered military strength in proportion as the French intensified their policy of collective punishments, internment camps, and torture. The FLN had the sympathy



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and support of all the Maghreb peoples and the whole Arab world. This help has enabled it better to equip its guerrilla troops with rifles, machine-guns, and mortars as well as the shotguns they started with. The FLN Army today comprises 100,000 men, whose *actives* are organized in disciplined companies of 200. It is obviously not strong enough to face the French Army in other than guerrilla actions. But "after three years of warfare the insurgent forces are growing stronger daily both in number and firepower." (*New York Times,* March 8, 1958.) It is already strong enough to make the war "technically unwinnable" by the French, to quote Sulzberger. (*New York Times,* March 12.)

The scale of the fighting is evident from the French military authorities' claim that 32,000 "rebels" were killed in 1957 and over 3,000 a month in 1958, and their admission of losses of 2,500 in 1957 and of 250 a month in 1958. Moreover, "many foreigners believe that French losses are higher than reported, perhaps double the official figure." (*New York Times,* March 8.) The French Army does not cite the killing of thousands of civilians or the mounting list of tortures. Cases such as the torture of the Algerian girl Djemila Bourihed or of the French Communist writer Alleg and the killing of the French Communist mathematician Audin have become international *causes célèbres.* They are not exceptional but typify the ghastly brutality of French imperialism in its death throes.

The French somewhat inconsistently assert that, on the one hand, the revolt is Communist inspired and led and is dependent on Eastern European support, and that, on the other hand, it could not survive without the arms it receives *via* Tunis. The first claim is taken seriously by no one. The *Wall Street Journal* correspondent in North Africa reported on February 26, 1958, "Communist support is not a vital factor in the rebellion—but it could be before long." And the correspondent for the London *Times* reported on March 3, 1958, "If this is a Communist affair, it is a very badly organized one."

As for their arms, we have the word of Mannoni, *Le Monde's* Algerian correspondent: "Most of their arms, whether one likes it or not, are of Western origin." (*Le Monde,* March 21, 1958.)

The three correspondents are unanimous in their conclusion that cutting off the flow of arms through Tunis would not be a fatal blow to FLN; there are too many other channels, the Moroccan and Libyan borders as well as the Algerian coastline, through which arms from the Arab world could be gotten in.

So far the French have adamantly refused any negotiations with FLN, though the Socialists have had intermittent secret contacts with



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

some of its leaders. Indeed they treacherously exploited these contacts in the spectacular kidnapping, in October 1956, of the Moroccan plane in which five FLN representatives were flying from Rabat to Tunis, even though they were the Sultan of Morocco's personal guests and had French safe-conduct passes. Needless to say, this flagrant violation of international law still further antagonized the Moroccan and Tunisian peoples and Governments.

The absurdity of the French position that there are no "valid interlocutors" to negotiate with and that the FLN is afraid to test the extent of its popular following in elections is patent from the fact that the French arrest any "valid interlocutors" they can lay their hands on and that Algerian elections are a French national joke. Tunis and Morocco have repeatedly and in vain offered their good offices as intermediaries in negotiation.

### Oil in the Sahara

The newest rationalization French imperialism has found for its Algerian policy is the discovery of oil and iron ore deposits in the Sahara. While the first estimates of Saharan oil made by Mollet were distinctly rosy, it would appear that an annual production of 10-14 million tons would be attainable in a few years *if development could proceed peacefully.* The cost both of development and of extraction and transportation will be relatively high but production would still be profitable. Several American and British oil corporations are participating in exploration, and Saharan oil is already big business. It has already led to a boom on the Paris Bourse.

> The boom in oil shares on the Paris stock exchange has been a striking phenomenon, of wide psychological influence. For a number of years after the war the stock exchange was moribund. *Recently, largely under the influence of investments in oil,* it has been revived. . . . New oil issues have been snapped up by the public. An issue of Frs. 14 billion [$33 million] was covered in a few hours a month or so ago." (J. W. Saxe, "The Economics of Algeria, II", *The Banker,* November, 1957, p. 736, emphasis added.)

The French have given eloquent proof of their faith in their ability to stay on in Algeria by attaching the two areas in which oil has been found to a new "autonomous" economic region also embracing parts of French West and Equatorial Africa. But in any case they could not transport the oil to the Mediterranean coast without Algerian, Tunisian, or Libyan cooperation, and it is difficult to envisage the extraction of Saharan oil as a profitable continuing operation as long as the Algerian war continues.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

### Results of French Intransigence

French intransigence in Algeria has had fateful repercussions on all aspects of French policy, internal as well as external. It was a crucial factor—*the* crucial factor as far as the French Government was concerned—in the Suez fiasco. As for the economic impact of the war, Algeria now has two young and able-bodied French soldiers for every adult male French inhabitant; according to *The Banker* article already cited the total budgetary cost of the war is now $1.8 billion a year, and the chronic French balance of payments deficit is being seriously aggravated. There has been much discussion of the direct and indirect cost of the Algerian war to France but little if any of the cost to the Algerian people.

The war is deeply infecting the French body politic. Freedom of the French press is constantly violated by confiscations of newspapers and periodicals, not only Communist but also the Left-Socialist *France-Observateur*, the Mendèsiste *Express* and the liberal Catholic *Témoignage Chrétien*. And the rot is spreading with the growing number of detentions, arrests, and sentences to prison of Protestant pastors, and Catholic students, as well as of political militants, who are united in trying to put an end to this dirtiest of all French colonial wars. The war is indissolubly connected with the rise of a fascist menace in France, a menace which it would be folly to discount in the light of the Paris police demonstration of March 13. The real danger is not of a French form of Nazism—history rarely repeats itself so mechanically—but of a fascism in which the social chauvinist "National-Molletism" would be an essential ingredient.

### Reasons for French Intransigence

Why has France been so uniformly and obtusely intransigent? After all, the iron glove has concealed her weakness from no one but herself, and the twin policies of colonial repression and international adventurism à la Bidault at the time of Dienbienphu and à la Mollet in the Suez aggression serve not to defer but to hasten the day of reckoning.

It is fashionable to account for the idiocies of French colonial policy—unlike the God of Einstein's physical universe, the French bourgeoisie may cheat, but it is not very clever—by reference to the trauma inflicted on the national consciousness by the defeat of 1940. But this is obviously only a secondary consideration. The fact of the existence of a sizeable French settlement in North Africa is certainly relevant although it does not by itself provide an adequate explanation of French intransigence. A similar policy was pursued in Indo-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

china, where there was no large-scale French settlement and where French material interests were much smaller than in North Africa, and it was abandoned only after military defeat in the field and after Bidault, Radford, and Dulles had failed to provoke a world war.

At least two other factors merit consideration. First, the French ruling class is losing, if it has not already lost, its capacity to see and act in its interests as a whole. If this incapacity is the subjective reflection of the French bourgeoisie's objective weakness, it nevertheless cannot be ignored, especially in the short run. This incapacity helps to explain the French bourgeoisie's otherwise incomprehensible attitude to Mendès-France, its ablest politician. He may not be the only French bourgeois politician who is able to take a broad view of French capitalist interests as a whole, but he is the only one who has the gift of dramatizing and popularizing this broad view. Nevertheless, the very people he wishes to save either distrust or detest him. Because he sees further than the rest, he realizes that *long-run* class interests demand the making of concessions in the colonial and other fields. But the groups at whose immediate expense the concessions would have to be made will have none of him, and those capitalist groups not so directly concerned are at best indifferent to longer-run interests.

The other factor lying behind French intransigence, and the one to which we attach the greater weight, is the division of the French Left, a division without which the French Right could never have succeeded in its parliamentary tactics of blackmail. This is not the place to pursue the ramifications of the tragic lack of unity among French communists, socialists, and left liberals. Suffice to say here that not only has it made and is it making reasonable compromises on all outstanding North African issues incomparably more difficult. It is also leaving the way open to the growth of the menace of French fascism.

### The Role of the United States

America is both the pillar and the residuary legatee of world imperialism. On the one hand, it is in the American ruling class's interest to prop up its allies with their disintegrating empires—in the words of Mohammed Yazid, the FLN representative in New York, "America is anti-colonialist on Sundays." On the other hand, this disintegration opens up new fields for American imperialist penetration, which is rationalized under the guise of the crusade against Communism. These contradictions between them determine American policy in North Africa. America needs France as an ally and base in Europe and, says Senator Kennedy, "American neutrality is mean-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ingless when we give France credit and arms." Of the 25 bombers involved in the Sakiet incident, 16 were American-made, and early this year a French mission to Washington received credits totaling $655 million from America, the International Monetary Fund, and the European Payments Union.

At the same time, Washington can see that the days of French imperialism in North Africa are numbered, and the State Department has already stepped in with the sale of arms to Tunis and with financial aid to Tunis and Morocco. Besides, the United States has air bases—never mind that the intercontinental missile has rendered them obsolescent—in Morocco and Libya. Washington does not want to see the Maghreb go the way of Nasser and adopt his policy of positive neutrality. Accordingly, United States policy makers have already repaired their fences with the Sultan of Morocco and with Bourguiba. They already have their contacts with Istiqlal and Néo-Destour and with the Moroccan and Tunisian trade union movements.

The drift of American policy is therefore clear. It is to push for a West Mediterranean alliance, preferably as a part of the NATO system. Whether such an alliance is nominally under French tutelage is unimportant, since eventually it would fall under American control. But the establishment of such an alliance is impossible as long as the Algerian war continues and inevitably breeds dangerous incidents such as Sakiet, which make the position of the pro-Western groups in the Maghrebi nationalist parties precarious if not altogether untenable.

France cannot survive as the dominant imperialist power in North Africa. Some settlement with the FLN, probably through international negotiations, is inevitable. The *colons* themselves are losing hope; large numbers are returning to France, and there is a steady flight of French capital from the Maghreb. Morocco, Tunis, and Algeria will sooner or later form a Maghrebi Federation, a program to which Istiqlal, FLN, and Néo-Destour are all committed. It is too early to tell whether this Federation will achieve genuine independence or will be pushed into a so-called Mediterranean Alliance.

(April 8, 1958)

---

*I would annex the planets if I could, I often think of that. It makes me sad to see them so clear and yet so far.*

—Cecil Rhodes



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# AN ESSAY CONTEST

Recently a subscriber wrote us a long and thoughtful letter about some of the problems that are troubling him and other American socialists of his acquaintance. We quote:

> I know that many of us have questions fundamental to the renewal of socialist identification and conviction: political questions about freedom, representation, and means for control of state power; economic questions, national and international, about forms production can take, whether centralized, decentralized, or taking on the various socialistic patterns found in the Soviet world, in Israel, in Yugoslavia, in France; and the problem of a world economy without economic colonies or satellites. And very important indeed are the psychological questions which most socialists, priding themselves on being simon-pure, raise only by their failures; the problems of interpersonal relations, of honesty, love of justice and truth, of the need for a genuine warmth and regard for people as individuals to replace the current popular IBM evaluation of them by those holding power.

Our correspondent concluded by saying that he would like to see MR establish a regular department in which these questions could be discussed and debated.

This is an interesting suggestion but unfortunately not a practicable one—at least not under present circumstances. There are two reasons for this: (1) MR lacks the space to institute **any** additional regular feature. (2) Past experience with open discussions has convinced us that readers who really have something to say are not normally stimulated to participate and that the general level of material submitted is therefore not high.

Not being willing to leave the matter there, however, we decided to make an experiment. We asked our correspondent to send us a list of the questions he would be most interested to see discussed. From this list we selected the following four:



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(1) Are the mechanisms of a planned economy harmonious with the freedom of the individual?

(2) How can social values be inculcated in the populace without at the same time creating a totalitarian pressure to conformity?

(3) What are the tasks of education in a rational society?

(4) Are the ideas of Love and Brotherhood mere sentimentality, or have they a crucial importance in a socialist society?

We invite essays answering any one of these questions. For the best essay we offer a prize of $50 and publication in MR. For any other essays accepted for publication we will pay $25. We will select from among MR's contributors and friends a board of three judges to be announced later. They will award the first prize in their sole discretion and recommend to us further essays for publication.

**The terms of the contest are as follows:**

- **LENGTH—a maximum of 2,000 words.**
- **DEADLINE—entries must be postmarked not later than September 15, 1958.**
- **FORMAT—each entry must be double-spaced with adequate margins, cleanly typed, and submitted in three copies, one for each judge. The name and address of the author must be included on a SEPARATE sheet of paper and must NOT appear on the essays themselves.**
- **WHO MAY ENTER—anyone, regardless of age or professional status. Each entrant may submit one essay but no more than one on each question.**
- **RETURN OF MSS.—manuscripts unaccompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope will not be returned.**



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# THE MEN OF MATRIARCHAL AMERICA

## FROM EVE MERRIAM

The following manuscript was submitted to us by Eve Merriam, poet and sociologist of American mores, whose forthcoming book *The Double Bed: From the Feminine Side,* soon to be published by Cameron Associates, can be counted on to raise eyebrows and issues in about equal numbers.—The Editors

Alexander Crosby in "The Lolling Masses" (MR, March 1958) argues that the ruling classes first subdued the American woman and are now trying to make the male as weak as the female. His thesis is perfectly correct except that he is reading the handwriting on the wall upside down. When he rights himself he will realize that it is the women who took over capitalism and then, as a sort of casual secondary appendage to the system, encompassed the male. Venus-envy is built into our system; the word "husband" for instance being a corruption of the original phrase "has-been." We are not, as Crosby puts it, "a near-matriarchate." Goddess forbid! We skipped over that namby-pamby in-between stage long ago. We are dwelling in the midst of pure, total Shedom: the sheerest Momocracy ever to emerge. For a few specifics, see the report below. For obvious reasons, I am unable to reveal the identity of the author who smuggled the document to me by a dangerous and devious route.—Eve Merriam

* * *

I have traveled across the country of United Sororal America.

I have seen matrons ruling over suburban strongholds set deep into the Pacific Redwood forests.

I have visited the City of Sisterly Love.

I have watched the demonstrations on Mother's Day: the candy boxes, the pink paper carnations, the ribbons, the boastful broadcast on the Horn and Hardart Hour—"Make Every Day Mother's Day".

Everywhere it is the same sickening story. But it is, alas, taking place in a society so gravely ill it does not even know it is sick.

For despite recent uprisings against certain excesses, the feminist world is more strongly entrenched than ever. If anything, its power and influence are increasing.

That is the tragic substance of my report, and it is my sincere belief that we should not spend another penny to smuggle in copies of *Captain Billy's Whiz-Bang* or the *Playboy's Pen-Pal Gazette.* We



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shall have to devise more dramatic and drastic methods to reach out to the benighted masculine population. For the truth must be told, and the truth is that they do not read or listen to our efforts, because they do not wish to. They have been beaten into complete subjection.

I know, for I have seen the men's faces blank, washed, clean-shaven; their once brisk beards as softly, laxly lanolized as their minds.

I have witnessed historic landmarks, like the Men's Bar of the Ritz, razed to the ground to make way for banks featuring joint checking accounts—and the demolition done by men.

I have taken part in farcical "free" elections. (Rigged, in advance, so that only a woman can win the title of Miss Rheingold or Mrs. America.)

Everywhere women are in control. It is a one-sex system, dominating the YWCA, the YWHA, the Negro Women's Business and Professional Clubs, and countless other organizations. All the way down the line—and it is official—there is not a male officer, not even a rank-and-file member.

What is most shocking about the matriarchal tyranny is that the men are completely subdued and yet they do not complain. They seem to like it that way. They are afraid to fear.

I will give but one example. I tapped a fellow on the shoulder and whispered stealthily, "Cheer up. Women, you know, are like street-cars. They come and they go."

He shrugged. "We have not had street-cars since I was a boy," and he turned away.

They are prisoners who do not know they are unfree. Their bars are subliminal.

Disguised as one of these creatures that once were men, I posed as a true believer in order to gain their confidence. I did a stint of dish-drying and diapering. I even attended courses on Household Hints for Husbands. Only one dared reveal the condition of his servitude, but since he is a typical victim of the terror, his words speak for millions. R.I. (not his real initials) informed me: "My wife decides what TV programs we watch, which commercials to teach the children. She picks out my socks, my ties, my suits—everything except my mistresses."

R.I. could be George or Jim or Harry and Bert or Tommy Womanville—any and every intimidated male whose only silent rebellion consists in not reading Sylvia Porter's column.

My heart has bled for their smothered cries that they dare not



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

utter aloud. Yet sometimes, bending over the Bendix, dully dipping the daily dacron, their former souls emerge and they curse and yell—but only against the automatic dial that has slipped inadvertently from Cool to Scald. Occasionally, hanging up the drip-dry, their own tears mingle and roll symbolically down the wrinkle-shed fabric.

Yet they go on—unprotesting, uncomplaining, clinging to this inexorable system that has conditioned them from birth—from months before—to the presence of a woman. They cannot conceive of any other way of life.

So they endure. I have watched them, returning after long absences, icy and chilled, from the recesses of the home deep-freeze, their fingers so numbed they could scarcely unwrap the foil casing.

They are truly pathetic creatures, donning their old army boots to range the supermarket aisles. I have paced alongside them, gazed into their shopping carts and examined the contents: pickled onions because she likes them, buttermilk and cottage cheese because she is on a diet, filter-tip cigarettes in a crushproof box because she prefers them to the soft pack. "And so do I," the men insist with pseudo-confidence. Briskly they hasten on to purchase the latest copy of *Woman's Daily* featuring He-Man Hearty Sandwiches That He Can Make Himself. Faithfully they carry out the instructions: pastrami, salami; more pastrami, more salami. Indignantly they deny that any dictatorship compels them to spread the bread with mayonnaise. (A few sporadic rebellions among the younger men have forced through a policy of "Let many combinations flourish; mix and match to your own native palate," but so far no one has come up with anything that omits the mayonnaise altogether.)

Facts must be faced without flinching: the old masculine taste-buds have been extirpated, torn out by the roots, re-cultured.

The second sex has won.

We can only hope that it is not the total end of the free world. We must believe that somewhere, somehow, a third sex will arise.

---

*Breathes there a man with soul so tough*
*Who says two sexes aren't enough?*

—Samuel Hoffenstein

---

*When men and women agree, it is only in their conclusions; their reasons are always different.*

—George Santayana



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# WORLD EVENTS

*By Scott Nearing*

## Recession News

Between February 21 and March 30 we traveled 4,400 miles by car from Maine to California and caught a fleeting glimpse of the Atlantic seaboard, of Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. It would not be fair to say that we visited 19 states and the District of Columbia, because we did little more than pass through some of them. In others, however, we stayed for varying periods of time, from days to weeks. In all of the states through which we passed we questioned shop keepers, garage men, friends and strangers concerning the state of the local economy.

There was no consensus of opinion, but we had a wide range of answers. The most optimistic reports were in Texas. In the oil regions, production of crude oil was being cut back to eight days per month. Up to that point, we were told, Texas had felt little effect of the general economic recession. Our informants would not say that business had been good, but they did feel that it had been "fair to middling" up to the time of the cutbacks.

Oil cutbacks were having their effect however. While we were in Texas, buyers were careful, especially in making commitments on large items such as refrigerators, autos, and houses. Retail stores were beginning to feel the pinch. We saw a few large construction projects, such as office buildings, but little house building.

We had our look at Texas during the worst month of the year so far as building was concerned. While we saw no snow after we left Virginia, March is accepted as a dull month for builders even in the South. Old jobs are out of the way and new ones are not yet started.

Reports from the Washington Labor Department's Bureau of Employment confirmed our observations of Texas economy. While we were in Dallas, the newspapers were printing headlines, "Jobless Rate for Texas Lowest in Nation." At the end of February 1958 only 66,321 unemployed were receiving unemployment insurance payments in the state. This was a rate of 3.6 percent for Texas compared with the 7.9 percent average for the country as a whole.

Labor Department figures up to the end of February gave the



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

percentage of insured workers who were unemployed as 10.7 for Maine, 7.3 for Massachusetts, 7.4 for New York, 10.1 percent for Pennsylvania, and 8.4 for California. The highest figure, 14.9 percent, was for Montana. The lowest rate was for the non-industrial District of Columbia. Subject to these variations, the recession was nation wide. In its more critical areas—mining, steel, auto production, agricultural machinery—it had reached serious proportions, with 10 percent or more of the labor force out of work.

In sharp contrast with the relative normality of Texas economy was the stark desperation in a Virginia tobacco area through which we drove. Drought in the late summer of 1957 had reduced the tobacco crop on some farms and lowered the quality throughout the region. Consequently farmers had debts instead of cash surpluses. Stores were empty. Farmers had no money to buy fertilizer, which plays a large part in tobacco production. No one in the neighborhood was using cars or trucks, so there were fewer gas sales. One local business man summed up the situation in four words: "The town is dead." After looking around, we agreed with him.

From Virginia to California the automobile industry was the sick man of the economy. Wherever we turned, there were car lots filled with shining new 1958 cars, while the used car lots were jammed to capacity. Outside of the big cities, there were few cars on the roads. Garage repair shops were empty. Filling station attendants stood idle or sat and gossiped. At night the motels which have mushroomed along arterial highways in the past few years all showed vacancy signs except in Tucson and Phoenix, Arizona, which are winter resorts for northern visitors. A motel with 12 to 16 units was fortunate to have half a dozen cars of a night. Less salesmen were traveling and there were few tourists.

Auto dealers were desperate. In Washington we heard a radio broadcast from a dealer who had a hundred new cars in his lot. "Help," he shouted over the microphone. "We need help! Come in and look over our stock. We have all models, all colors. No reasonable offer will be refused."

Newspapers across the country carried pages of auto ads. A Mobile, Alabama, paper had a half page ad from a dealer glutted with used cars. "Have you got a car with four wheels?" he queried. "If you have, bring it in. Drive it. Push it. Tow it. If you can't move it, call us. We will send a wrecker and bring it in free of charge. Anything with four wheels will be accepted as part payment on any of our attractive used car offers."

By chance we met an unemployed worker of fifty who had lost his job in January. As a stopgap he went to work for one of the



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

major auto companies. He and a companion were directed to visit the salesrooms that handled the company's cars, pretend to be car buyers, and report to the parent company on the attitude of the salesmen. The comment of our informant was illuminating. He and his partner had found a third of the salesmen to be alert and ready to sell cars, but the other two-thirds were so discouraged and dejected by their previous failure to move new cars that they hardly went through the motions of selling. They were all but hopeless.

The only report on the auto situation more adverse than this one was carried in the San Francisco edition of the *Wall Street Journal,* for March 24, 1958. This was a front-page right-hand-column story written from Detroit by Dan Cordtz. The story began with a description of East Jefferson Avenue, Detroit, which runs from downtown to the comfortable Gross Pointe suburb. The reporter saw more than fifty abandoned stores, barber shops, lunch counters, and retail shops, "a line of patient applicants for relief" in front of the Public Welfare Department, a neighboring movie which was "open all night" for those who could not afford a hotel and had nowhere else to sleep, and a pawn shop displaying an announcement: "No funds for loans until next week."

About 15 percent of the Detroit labor force is classed as unemployed. Others are working on short time. Within three months 95,000 Detroit workers have been laid off. Unemployed in the city totaled 230,000 at the end of March. Departing from its usual practice, the *Journal* in this story gave details of wages, family budgets, and the tribulations of auto workers. many of whom had spent the better part of their adult lives in auto shops and who had been out of work for months.

Auto makers boast that the industry is the most important in the country. "What is good for General Motors is good for the United States." In the early months of 1958 auto producers were in a position to turn out somewhere between 8.5 and 10 million units per year. In the first quarter of 1958 actual production was running at about half of capacity and there were 900,000 unsold 1958 cars in the salesrooms or on the parking lots of the dealers.

Auto company executives receive top salaries, fat bonuses, and generous expense accounts. In free enterprise theory these "incentives" should attract top level brains and experience. Yet a fifty year old key industry, in the spring of 1958, found itself with a productive capacity 100 percent above market demand, an inventory of new cars that may take three months or more to liquidate, and in one area alone a quarter of a million workers in the industry unemployed and headed for the breadline. If such poor judgment and lack of



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

foresight were reported from the Soviet Union, the press and radio of the United States would scoff and jeer. What should they say when bungling and blundering occur in the most strategic of free enterprise industries?

### Why Don't They Sell?

After a moan about the low level of steel production (50 percent of capacity at the end of March) and a hopeful reminder that the reduction in steel inventories would compel jobbers to send in some orders to the steel manufacturers, *Time* magazine for March 24, 1958 wrote: "What could turn steel around, and give the entire economy a healthy lift, is auto sales. With an inventory of 900,000 unsold cars, the industry needs a big pickup in sales before it can step up production again."

True enough. A rush of auto sales would buck up steel and many another industry. Why are sales dragging?

On the same page, *Time* quotes Professor Sumner Schlichter of the Harvard School of Business Administration, who is perhaps the most eminent academic United States champion of the private enterprise system. Professor Schlichter believes that the 1958 cars are "inconveniently long, inconveniently wide, inconveniently low, wasteful of gas, expensive to maintain, clumsy, and ugly."

If Professor Schlichter is even half right, why should any rational human being buy such products?

### Buy 'Em and Dump 'Em

Many schemes have been suggested to rescue the free enterprise auto industry of the United States from the quagmire into which it has been driven. We have examined those that came to our attention with growing incredulity, asking ourselves, "How can sane human beings be so stupid?" We feel that the booby prize in this competition of ineptitudes should go to the *Wall Street Journal* for its editorial on March 25, 1958.

After a reference to "the present industrial over-capacity that can be described as 'recession'," the editorial offers this suggestion: "What is really needed, obviously, is some 'crash' legislation by Congress which would have the Government buy two million cars and dump them in the middle of the Atlantic." The same editorial quotes Harold J. Ruttenberg, former chief economist of the United Steelworkers and now president of the Stardrill-Keystone Company: "There is nothing wrong with the American economy that the sale of two million new cars in the second quarter would not cure."



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Having a high regard for the editorial capacity of the *Journal* we hope that this plan for dealing with the recession (which they put in quotes) was written with tongue in cheek. If so, it is a sour joke for the six or seven million United States unemployed. If it was intended seriously, we point out to the *Journal* that if the same dunderheads who are operating the auto industry in 1958 continue at their posts into the spring of 1959, it will be necessary for Washington to buy up and dump not two but three million of the longer, heavier, more be-gadgeted cars during that summer.

If Washington must bail out the incompetently managed auto industry, we would suggest an alternative dumping ground. Why not buy the cars and give them to the bona fide unemployed? Many of the unemployed helped to make the cars in the first place. This generous gesture would not hurt the car market, because the unemployed certainly cannot buy the cars in any case. But if the *Journal* feels that such a move would spoil the market for future auto sales in the United States, we offer still another plan.

People's China is now producing a limited number of trucks, but has not yet begun the production of passenger cars. Washington might buy two million automotive units and present them, with the good wishes of the American people and the United States Government, to the Chinese People's Republic. Such a gesture would generate good will at the same time that it relieved the auto industry of the ghastly monument to mismanagement which now litters parking lots all across the nation.

### Looking for Trouble

*Fortune* magazine (January 1958) celebrated the New Year with an article on "the migration of U.S. capital." The article deals not with government, but with private investment, in the present and the foreseeable future.

United States investors have been putting money into foreign-based enterprises ever since the beginning of the present century. There was a spurt in foreign loans and investments during and immediately after the War of 1914-1918. The episode came to an end in 1928. Another United States capital export spurt is now under way in "the expansion of India's Tata steelworks and the building of new roads in the Belgian Congo." There are other ventures in Peru, Brazil, and Burma. "Corporate managers in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Peoria, Illinois, have been increasing the direct investment of their companies in oil wells, mines, factories, warehouses, and supermarkets in all parts of the free world."

Capital migration from the United States averaged $1.6 billion



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

per year from 1946 to 1955. In 1956-1957 "the outflow jumped more than two and a half times—to $4.3 billion." This figure does not include from a billion to a billion and a half annually reinvested out of depreciation and depletion allowances. With these items included, "average foreign investment in 1956 and 1957 would be close to $6 billion." There will be minor fluctuations, but the outflow of capital from the United States "will increase over the long term." By 1966, *Fortune* estimates net U.S. investments abroad (excluding depletion and depreciation) will be running to $7 billion a year, and total foreign holdings will correspondingly rise."

Present United States investment abroad is placed at $37.5 billion, "roughly double what it was in 1950. Given present rates of increase, it seems likely that a decade from now private foreign investment will rise to nearly $60 billion."

Another item must be considered in this connection. United States exports of goods and services in 1957 amounted to $26 billion. In addition to these exports, the 2,500 United States business concerns that have branches or subsidiaries abroad sold an estimated $32 billion including exports back to the United States, making a United States controlled foreign market of nearly $60 billion.

Earnings on all United States foreign investments were $3.7 billion in 1957. "Foreign earnings will more than double in ten years, more than twice the probable gain in domestic profits." Present returns on foreign investments are 8 percent of United States corporate profits before taxes and 15 percent after taxes are paid.

Individual concerns run far ahead of these averages. Standard Oil of New Jersey receives three-quarters of its earnings from foreign operations. H. J. Heinz and Colgate-Palmolive made more than 70 percent of their 1956 net profits on foreign operations. American Radiator, Gillette, International Harvester, National Cash Register, and F. W. Woolworth made over 40 percent of their net earnings in foreign operatives.

During the boom which attended and followed the War of 1914-1918, domestic capital investment was followed by a spurt of capital export and a rise in the export of goods and services. It was also followed by the decade-long recession and depression that began in 1929. The cycle seems to be repeating itself, with the United States domestic capital market unable to absorb the investment-seeking funds.

### Let 'Em Wear Mink!

At a New York auction of ranch mink in late February 1958, a Miami furrier bought 26 pelts to make into a short cape. He paid



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

$420 a skin, or a total of $10,920. The *New York Times* of February 26 titled this story in its business section: "Recession?", and noted that "Mink, one of the symbols of luxurious living, is still bringing top prices."

When she was told that the people of Paris were crying for bread, Marie Antoinette is reported to have asked, "Why don't they eat cake?"

The Miami version is "Let 'em wear mink."

---

WE MUST FIGHT

*We must constantly fight the doctrine of personal security, seniority rights, equal rewards for all, and all of the other fallacies which have been inculcated in our people since 1933.*

—General Leslie R. Groves, *The New York Times,* April 19, 1956.

---

*America turns out only one kind of man. Listen to the conversation of any two men in a street car. They are talking about the price of something—building material, advertising, bonds, cigars.*

—John Jay Chapman, *Causes and Consequences*

---

*If our only intelligible national aim becomes the creation of super-powerful weapons of mass destruction; if this leads us to large shifts of purchasing power from consumer to military goods; if this in turn means heavy increases in taxation and much greater control by government of industrial production; if this only intensifies the regressive fears of war, of espionage, of subversion, who can say that McCarthyism will not revive in much more acute form?*

*Can a military society, organized primarily around great bombs and rockets, remain a free society—free in thought, belief and debate, free in the power of the ballot or in the right to strike, free in its access to the information on which its policy-makers arrive at their decisions and free to apply its intelligence and creative powers to the production of better decisions? It seems improbable.*

—Walter Millis, *New York Times Magazine,* February 2, 1958



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# WHERE WE STAND

## BY THE EDITORS

During the early years of the 20th century the subject of socialism was widely and eagerly discussed in the United States. Eugene V. Debs, socialist candidate for president, polled close to 1,000,000 votes in 1912—the equivalent of approximately 3,000,000 votes in the 1948 election. The popular interest in socialism was reflected in an enormous sale of socialist literature. *The Appeal to Reason,* a weekly, had a circulation of more than 300,000 for several years; pamphlets by Oscar Ameringer were printed in editions of hundreds of thousands; books by Bellamy, Upton Sinclair, and Jack London ranked with the best-sellers of the day.

This widespread interest in socialism has declined to such an extent that today it would probably not be an exaggeration to say that for the great majority of Americans "socialism" is little more than a dirty word. This is an extraordinary situation because it occurs at the very moment that a large proportion of the rest of the world is moving toward socialism at an unprecedentedly rapid rate. It is a deeply disturbing situation because there are still many Americans who believe with us that, in the long run, socialism will prove to be the only solution to the increasingly serious economic and social problems that face the United States.

It is because we hold firmly to this belief that we are founding MONTHLY REVIEW, an independent magazine devoted to analyzing, from a socialist point of view, the most significant trends in domestic and foreign affairs.

By "socialism" we mean a system of society with two fundamental characteristics: first, public ownership of the decisive sectors of the economy, and second, comprehensive planning of production for the benefit of the producers themselves.

The possibility and workability of such a system of society are no longer open to doubt. Socialism became a reality with the introduction of the first Five Year Plan in Soviet Russia in 1928;

---

*Reprinted from Vol. I, (May,* 1949) *and the first issue of every subsequent year.*



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

its power to survive was demonstrated by the subsequent economic achievements of the USSR during the '30s, and finally, once and for all, in the war against Nazi Germany. These facts—and they are facts which no amount of wishful thinking can conjure away—give to the USSR a unique importance in the development of socialism and in the history of our time.

We find completely unrealistic the view of those who call themselves socialists, yet imagine that socialism can be built on an international scale by fighting it where it already exists. This is the road to war, not to socialism. On the other hand, we do not accept the view that the USSR is above criticism simply because it is socialist. We believe in, and shall be guided by, the principle that the cause of socialism has everything to gain and nothing to lose from a full and frank discussion of shortcomings, as well as accomplishments, of socialist countries and socialist parties everywhere.

We shall follow the development of socialism all over the world, but we want to emphasize that our major concern is less with socialism abroad than with socialism at home. We are convinced that the sooner the United States is transformed from a capitalist to a socialist society, the better it will be, not only for Americans, but for all mankind.

We believe that there are already many Americans who share this attitude with us and that their number will steadily increase. We ask for their financial support, their assistance in extending our circulation, and their advice as to how MONTHLY REVIEW can best serve the cause of socialism in the United States.

*Clarity about the aims and problems of socialism is of greatest significance in our age of transition. Since, under present circumstances, free and unhindered discussion of these problems has come under a powerful taboo, I consider the founding of this magazine to be an important public service.*

PROFESSOR ALBERT EINSTEIN
in his article "Why Socialism?" in Vol. I, No. 1



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# MR ASSOCIATES

is honored to present

as the featured speaker at its 9th Anniversary Meeting

# PROF. G. D. H. COLE

on the topic

***Socialism and Capitalism in the World Today***

Other Speakers:

LEO HUBERMAN: *The Labor Situation*
PAUL M. SWEEZY: *The State of the Economy*

Chairman: PROF. C. WRIGHT MILLS

Date: TUESDAY, MAY 27, 8:30 P.M. Sharp

Place: ROOSEVELT AUDITORIUM, 100 East 17 St. NYC

Admission: $1 in advance . . . $1.50 at the door . . .
Associates, free

We anticipate an overflow meeting. Order your tickets now.

suggested order form

Monthly Review Associates 66 Barrow Street New York 14, N.Y.

I enclose $..... for ..... tickets at $1 each to the May 27th meeting.

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... Zone ..... State .....

☐ I am an Associate for 1957-1958.
Please send me my free ticket for the meeting.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(*continued from inside front cover*)

July 27, 1957. Here are a few lines:

> He treated Oxford simply as an academic institution for the promotion of learning, instead of (as it is) a social mechanism for the corruption of the young. . . . If Oxford has done any good in the world in the last 30 years, it is thanks to Cole. More than any other man I have ever known he has kept his Radical faith and his Radical modesty unsullied.

Count yourself lucky if you live in the New York area and can hear Cole at the MR meeting on May 27 (details on page 32). Be good to your friends and bring them along. They will be grateful for the privilege.

For more than a year now two MR Press pamphlets have been out of print. Nothing saddens a publisher more than having to turn down orders. We've been saddened enough and now, at long last, we're doing something about it. On press at this moment—and again available when this note reaches you—are the pamphlets *Why Socialism?* by Albert Einstein (15¢ a copy, 7 for $1, 40 for $5) and *The ABC of Socialism* by Leo Huberman and Sybil H. May (50¢ a copy, 5 for $2, 13 for $5).

This summer, we will publish a special double issue, devoted entirely to the labor movement in the United States today. We are preparing it in collaboration with *The American Socialist*. Both magazines will have identical contents, and the editors of both magazines will contribute articles. In expanded form and with additional material, this number will subsequently be published as a book by Monthly Review Press.

The high praise we gave the Braden book in our last issue is being echoed by some of the people to whom we sent galley proofs. Bishop W. Appleton Lawrence of the Episcopal Church in New England writes: "Anne Braden's book *The Wall Between* is an exciting blow-by-blow description of what goes on beneath the surface when we talk about Race Relations. It reads almost like a detective story, and demonstrates the saying that 'Truth is sometimes stranger than fiction.' . . . It ought, I think, to be of real help in making people appreciate the deep roots and complexity of what we sometimes all too casually call 'the racial problem'."

And from Aubrey Williams, formerly top official in the New Deal and now publisher of a farm paper in Montgomery, Alabama, we received this comment: "I think it is the best book on the South since the Court declared the Separate but Equal Doctrine unconstitutional. Anne has rare ability as a portrayer of what takes place inside of people. Her book has the flavor of Balzac . . ."

Two times in eight days the Paris police confiscated copies of *France-Observateur* because it was saying what needed to be said in regard to French policy in Algeria (see page 15). Such confiscations are extremely costly and *France-Observateur* is asking for financial aid in its fight for freedom of the press. Readers who want to help should send their contributions to *France-Observateur,* 10 Faub. Montmartre, Paris 9, France.

If you want a "different" kind of summer vacation combining the usual recreational activities with serious discussions about world affairs, you can have it at World Fellowship, Conway, New Hampshire. The rates are extremely reasonable, $5.50 to $8 per day for meals and room. Among the scheduled speakers and discussion leaders are Scott and Helen Nearing, Dr. Royal W. France, Dr. Otto Nathan, and Allyn and Adele Rickett. Write for detailed information to the director, Willard Uphaus, Conway, New Hampshire.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

*A WAY OF LIFE FOR SOCIALISTS*

FOURTH, REVISED EDITION OF

*THE PHILOSOPHY OF*

# HUMANISM

***by Corliss Lamont***

With compelling vigor this book traces the historical roots of naturalistic Humanism and discusses the premises and implications of this philosophy for modern man. The author shows that man's answer to his problems lies in affirming life in the here and now, without recourse to magical formulas or supernatural beliefs; that man's hope for a better world is through the methods of reason, science and democracy.

A powerful antidote to prevailing irrationalisms in religion and philosophy.

Comment on earlier editions of
THE PHILOSOPHY OF HUMANISM

"Readable and persuasive" —*New York Times Book Review*

"The best presentation and analysis of its subject to be found in contemporary philosophy" —*Journal of Philosophy*

"A Philosophy of life in simple and honest terms" —*The Survey*

"This book is worth reading because as Christians we need to know what the opposition is saying" —*The Living Church*

Paper-back edition only $1.45

Cloth bound $2.49

*At your booksellers, or from*

**PHILOSOPHICAL LIBRARY**

15 East 40 Street, Desk M, New York 16, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED